April 1982, Number 75

The Delius Society Journal

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The Delius Society
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Acknowledgements

The cover illustration is an early sketch of Delius by Edvard Munch reproduced by kind permission of the Curator of the Munch Museum, Oslo. The photographs taken at the Keele Delius Festival have been supplied by Hans Peter Dieterling and Gilbert Parfitt to both of whom the Editor is extremely grateful.

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Editorial

Readers of the *Gramophone* will have seen with great pleasure that *The Fenby Legacy* record set on Unicorn-Kanchana was not only nominated for the 1981 Gramophone Record Awards but was voted the best choral record of the year. Furthermore it was joint runner-up for the distinction of being 'Record of the Year'. As Trevor Harvey wrote in his Award review: 'A legacy can be quite a small sum. This is the equivalent of being left a large fortune. It has given me the utmost pleasure ever since it appeared and I hope its success in gaining this award will encourage the sales which it deserves, for it is artistically – and, indeed, from every point of view – a total success.' Once again we offer our congratulations to all concerned. At Keele Dr Fenby announced that he is to accompany Felicity Lott in some Delius songs on a record to be produced, like 'The Legacy', by Christopher Palmer. We keenly anticipate such treasures in store. There has been no substantial collection of Delius songs on record (apart from the historical Beecham releases in the first boxed set) since the early Argo disc which is now quite a rarity. We are also delighted to hear that Dr Fenby is to conduct at this year's Edinburgh Festival in a programme of Delius and Grainger. Full details will be given in the Journal when they are available.

For reasons of health, Vernon Handley was unfortunately unable to address the Society as planned at the end of March, and members were offered at the last moment a substitute programme of recorded music. At the time of writing Mr Handley's digital all-Delius record on Classics for Pleasure CFP 40373 has just been released and the disc will be reviewed in our next issue. In the meantime members need have no hesitation in acquiring a copy, especially in view of the comparative low price of the records on this excellent label.

The 22nd Annual Delius Festival at Jacksonville, Florida was held from March 3 to March 5. An important feature of the Festival has been the Delius Composition Contest which this year attracted more than a hundred contestants from all over the World. This year's winner was Martin Rokeach from Michigan with his Sonata for Cello and Piano which was performed in the Award Concert on the afternoon of March 4. There were also recitals of solo songs and part songs, including a performance of the Three Early Part-Songs in the English translation by Lionel Carley who was a guest throughout the Festival, lecturing both on *Folkeraadet* and Delius's Letters by way of a preview of his forthcoming *Delius: A Life in Letters 1862–1908.* Looking ahead to the future, the 1984 Jacksonville Festival promises to be a very special occasion, commemorating as it does not only the 50th anniversary of Delius's death but also the centenary of Delius's setting foot in Jacksonville to manage the orange grove some thirty-five miles south, on the St Johns River.

The Delius Festival held in March at Keele University is fully reported within these pages. Let us reiterate what has been written there, and offer the Festival Committee our thanks and congratulations on the achievement of their enterprise, with a very special commendation for the Artistic Director, our member Philip Jones.

Festival Report

KEELE, MARCH 8th – 14th 1982

'Catering for what must at all events be a minority taste outside London is at best risky, and at worst foolish,' writes Mark Pargeter in his Chairman's report on the Keele Delius Festival. But he continues: 'It is evident that the organisers were not foolish in staging the Festival at the University of Keele and in the city of Stoke-on-Trent.' Those who made the journey to the Potteries, some coming from very far afield, will surely endorse that view. Certainly all the Delius Society festival-goers will also wish to pay tribute to the splendid organisation throughout the whole week. Nothing it seems was left to chance, and quite apart from the musical feast, everything from bodily sustenance to transport and accommodation was faultlessly planned for the convenience and gratification of the visitor. At all times our members were made to feel welcome and at home, and the friendly festival ambience no doubt owed much to its campus setting.

There had been some earlier qualms about the Festival's location and timing. Despite the proliferation of 'home-grown' festivals that sprout annually around the country, we still tend to think of such events in terms of London or some other major city. The realisation of a university-centred festival gave a pleasant knock to such a notion. Fears of the continuation of the wintry weather conditions must have loomed large in many prospective travellers' minds, but, as the Chairman has written, 'the use of large numbers of students dictated the timing of the Festival. This may, and probably did, produce difficulties, but the costs would have been unacceptable had the organisers to bring back the large numbers of students used during the Festival events. To do so would have added approximately £4,000 to the costs, and made the play *(Folkeraadet)* and *A Mass of Life* difficult, if not impossible to stage, certainly as components of the Festival.' In the event the weather was reasonably kind, if rather cold. The greatest disappointment was in the poor attendance figures, not for the week-end University-based events but the three major orchestral concerts held in Victoria Hall, Hanley. While the Society's representation at the Festival could certainly have been stronger, there was noticeably poor support from the resident district population.

To assist and inform the Visitor throughout the week's stay there was an excellent programme book compiled and edited by Stephen Banfield. As well as containing the programme notes for each concert and an extract of the lectures (together with the full text of the *Requiem* and *A Mass of Life*) there were many fine articles, including Dr Fenby writing on *Delius: the man and the musician,* Lionel Carley on *Folkeraadet,* Christopher Palmer's *Delius in Perspective*, and a lengthy and well-researched survey of *Delius in Hanley* by Jack Oliver. The book also contained a catalogue for the Festival exhibition (also available separately as a duplicated hand-out together with details of the photographic slide presentation). Well-illustrated, this 64-page programme book contained much else of interest and for its documentary material alone it is of more than mere souvenir

Hans Peter Dieterling and Robert Sandlin finding their seats before Stephen Banfield's lecture on *The Dance and its symbolism*. [Photo: Gilbert Parntt]

Discussion at the conclusion of the lecture. Far left: Stephen Lloyd (Editor) with Douglas Scorgie. Foreground: Rachel Lowe engaged in conversation with Bob Lyons. Behind them (l. to r.) Bill Perrott, Dick Kitching and Frank Wilson. [Photo: Gilbert Parfttt] interest and well worth the investigation of those who did not attend the Festival. Copies are still available from the Information Office, University of Keele, Keele, Staffordshire, at £2.00 or $6 post free.

For varying reasons not all those who attended the Festival were able to stay for the whole week, but it was a special delight to welcome many friends from abroad. The small party that gathered at the Grand Hotel in Hanley on March 8, the opening day, included Robert Sandlin (President of the Delius Association of Florida), Thomas Gunn (Director of the Swisher Library, Jacksonville University), Robert Lyons and Willard Perrott from Pittsburgh, and Douglas Scorgie from South Africa, reinforced by members attending individual events throughout the week. At the week-end there was a larger influx of members, including Fraulein Evelin Gerhardi and Hans Dieterling from West Germany. On the last day many members met for tea at the Grand Hotel and a large number enjoyed an excellent dinner there before leaving for the final event, a performance of *A Mass of Life.*

The Chairman's report rightly highlights performances of special note from the week's rich programme. 'Musically the week was a great triumph,' he has written. 'If I were to pick out those elements that will linger from the whole programme then I must point to Philip Jones' treatment of *Over the Hills and Far Away* with the Orchestra da Camera, the Ravel Quartet played by the Lindsay String Quartet, Ralph Holmes' superlatively delicate and consummate treatment of the Delius Violin Concerto with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Norman del Mar, and the first and last choruses of *A Mass of Life* which reached a rare pitch of precision, excitement and phrasing. Such splendid interpretation provided justification enough for the whole Festival.'

On Wednesday the centre of attraction was the first British production of *Folkeraadet*, or *Parliament* in Lionel Carley's new English translation specially prepared for Keele. He talked on the background to the play on the Wednesday afternoon before its first presentation that evening. Two further performances were given on Thursday and Saturday. Heiberg's play was a biting satire on the Norwegian parliamentary system and its politicians, here portrayed as being totally ineffectual in action and capable of little else than empty speechifying and arguing over trivia. The main characters to emerge are a Poet who is scorned by the girl he loves for not being a man of action, and a hotel porter, a sort of 'boots' or rather 'pots' whose lot in life is emptying chamber pots. (The presence on stage of an array of these receptacles, together with bits of slightly vulgar stage business, put the production somewhere mid-way between a Westminster and a Whitehall farce.) When the unheeded threat of an enemy invasion is at the eleventh hour taken seriously, an angry populace press-gangs its politicians into forming a militia, ill-equipped with only a box of cannons and 100 pairs of soldiers' trousers between them, to meet the enemy. (Why has this excellent idea never been put into practice?) But in the end it is Sparrow the porter who saves the day by blowing up a bridge to halt the enemy's advance, the politicians having already killed each other while arguing over such trivia as a suitable name for the bridge by which to commemorate the battle that none of them lives to fight. So Sparrow is ultimately chosen as leader and all ends happily with the poet winning the girl he loves.

This is an extremely difficult play to bring off effectively, with many temptations to replace characterisation by caricature and invention by cliche (as, for example, by representing the enemy as Nazis, a moment in this production that jarred). But the director, Brian Rawlins, made a valiant effort to face the many problems this play poses when time has inevitably robbed it of much of its initial satirical bite. Quite independently, the BBC has shown some interest in the play but it is not yet known if a broadcast production is a likelihood.

What one was particularly grateful for was the opportunity to discover how Delius's incidental music matched the play. Over eight years ago we had a chance to hear nearly all the *Folkeraadet* music played in a four-movement *Norwegian Suite* by the BBC Concert Orchestra under Ashley Lawrence. At Keele we were able for the first time to hear *all* the music: the four preludes (that formed the *Suite)* to Acts 1, 2, 3 & 5 played with the house lights up before the commencement of the action on stage, and the two short passages for strings played during the course of Acts 2 and 5, one being the 'love music' and the other a tender moment that presages a similar mood in the much later *Hassan* music. All the music was very well performed by the Keele University Orchestra, about 60 strong, under the alert direction of George Pratt. Just for future reference, with so much of the music parodying the Norwegian national anthem probably unfamiliar to most of the audience, might it not be an idea to play the anthem first and so provide the ‘theme’ for the ‘variations’ that are to follow.

Act One of *Folkeraadet,* with the politicians haranguing in the market square.
[Photo: Hans Peter DieterlingJ

Mr and Mrs Gilbert Parfitt in conversation with Lionel Carley (centre).
[Photo: Hans Peter Dieterling]

There was of course much else besides: excellent dissertations presented by Lionel Carley, Stephen Banfield and Professor Mellers, and the initial disappointment of Felicity Lott's indisposition for her planned lecture/recital with Dr Fenby was soon banished by the charming and inimitable way in which our President stepped in with a morning's reminiscence of his time spent with Delius that was a pure delight to the packed audience. The previous evening amateur forces under the baton of Ivor Keys bravely accepted the challenge of the *Requiem* and Holst's *Hymn of Jesus* in the Keele Chapel where throughout the week there was an excellent exhibition to allow the visitor some more leisurely moments in contrast to the fast pace of events occurring all around. In the chapel entrance-way there was too a fine display of records and scores of British music, arranged by Banks & Son Ltd of 2 Stonegate, York (tel. 0904-58836) who would welcome enquiries from those interested in British music. Certainly the selection of scores on sale was as comprehensive as one is likely to find anywhere, with much that was far off the beaten track, from Baines and Bantock to Smyth and Sorabji.

But the closing event of the week, *A Mass of Life,* was a splendid summation of the Festival's achievement and a fitting triumph for Philip Jones both as conductor and artistic director. Dick Kitching has kindly supplied the following report:

> The audience for the performance of *A Mass of Life* at the Victoria Hall, Hanley was, happily, better than the sparse attendance at the excellent RLPO

concert on the previous Friday. From the first moment it was apparent that this was to be a young man's performance - full of vitality and drive but yet not lacking in poetry. In fact the work was held together very much better than performances I have heard from some very experienced and distinguished conductors. The Northern Symphony Orchestra played excellently throughout, although there was an unfortunate lapse on the part of the solo oboe in the lovely introduction to ‘mid-day in the meadows’. The chorus (the Ceramic City Choir and the University of Keele Choral Society) on the whole performed well, although there were one or two tentative entries.

Thomas Hemsley (baritone) seemed to me rather less good than on previous occasions I have heard him in this part, and in Part I was rather submerged by the orchestra. The balance between soloist and orchestra seemed rather better in Part 2. The other soloists, Kenneth Bowen, Helen Watts and Wendy Eathorne (who was deputising at 24 hours’ notice for Felicity Lott), all sang their respective parts beautifully and nobody would have guessed that Wendy Eathome had stepped into the breach at the last minute.

I do not wish the small criticisms I have made in any way to detract from what I consider to be a major achievement by all and in particular by Philip Jones. I am one of those Delius admirers who feels that there is always

Dining in Keele Hall. Facing (l. to r.) are Robert Sandlin, Henry Giles, Dick Kitching, Elizabeth and Mike Green, and Bill Perrott. Back to camera are Douglas Scorgie, Lilian Parfitt, Margaret and Peter Trotman, and Rodney Meadows. [Photo: Gilbert Parfitt]

(l. to r.) Evelin Gerhardi, Rowena Fenby, Mark Pargeter (Chairman of the Fourth Delius Festival) and Dr Eric Fenby. [Photo: Hans Peter Dieterling]

> passion and ardour in Delius's music but that many interpreters fail to bring this out, seeming to concentrate solely on the dreamy and reflective aspects. In my view this always results in a feeling of lassitude (and sometimes even boredom) due to the resulting lack of contrast in tempo and mood. There was no such fault here, and there was also plenty of poetry and imagination in the quieter passages. All in all, the performance of the *Mass* (relayed by Radio Stoke) was a fitting climax to a most ambitious and successful festival.

Let two visitors from abroad have the last words. First, Douglas Scorgie from South Africa, who has written:

> When I received news last November of the Fourth Delius Festival, I worked out that these celebrations of Delius's genius were occurring once every 20 years or so. The 5th Festival is theoretically due about the year 2000. As I might not be able to hear it by this date, I felt I should make light of 6,000 miles and come to Keele. Socially it has given me the chance to make several pen-friends and actual friends including new ones whose names I had previously only seen in print. Musically the Festival was a major success from start to finish: a superb performance of *A Mass of Life,* the *Requiem* revealed as the great work it really is, the splendid fresh voices of the enthusiastic choirs, the fine playing of the Lindsay String Quartet, three excellent lectures (but one given too late at night), the presence of Dr Fenby, and the fact that in Philip Jones a new young conductor has emerged who has the ability to reveal Delius in his true stature.

Finally, a word from Robert Sandlin who came to Keele fresh from another Delius Festival only recently concluded in Florida:

> The Fourth Delius Festival at Keele University was an event of international musical significance. There were visitors from Sweden, Finland, the United States, Germany, and the Republic of South Africa. The Festival Committee, headed by Dr Philip Jones, planned excellent concerts, encompassing a wide variety of works by Delius and several contemporaries. Delius's originality and unique harmonic language were thus vividly highlighted. Two programmes during the week-long festival were particularly outstanding for me: the splendid quartet programme by the Lindsay String Quartet and the final presentation of *A Mass of Life.*
>
> A great deal of sparkle was added to the festival week by the presence of Dr Eric Fenby, OBE, President of the Delius Society, and Dr Lionel Carley, Archivist of the Delius Trust. Both gentlemen presented informative and witty lectures.
>
> The entire project was a very ambitious undertaking and certainly a great credit to the officials of Keele University who gave it their finest efforts. My heartiest congratulations for a superb week.

Correspondence

From Ronald Kirkman, Geneva.

Apropos of the portrait of Delius painted, according to Eric Fenby, 'when he played cricket for Paris' (January issue of the Journal, p.18), I think I might perhaps be able to throw a glimmer of light on this. When I lived in Paris in the 1960s I was for several years a member of the 'Standard Athletic Club', in the forest of Meudon, just outside Paris. Under the statutes of the Club, the membership was to be not less than 50 per cent British, and indeed it really was like a piece of the English countryside transplanted into the Ile de France, with its cricket pitch, tennis courts, Union Jack flying and, of course, the 'tea interval' at 4.30 p.m., with tea and cakes served beneath a portrait of the Queen (who in fact visited the Club during the early years of her reign).

The Standard Athletic Club was founded, if I remember rightly, in 1888, and it seems to be very likely, indeed almost certain, that it was there that Delius played cricket. There is just a faint hope, I imagine, that early membership records still survive in the Club archives, and wouldn't it be interesting if the name of Delius appeared in them? A thin lead, perhaps, but research has been based on less. For what it is worth, the address is: Standard Athletic Club, route Forestière, Meudon-la-Forêt 92, France; tel. (01) 626.16.09.

Beecham: The Delius Repertoire

PART TWO

by Stephen Lloyd

This article continues the detailed examination begun in Journal 71 (April 1981) of Beecham's Delius repertoire. Here again it is hoped that the inevitable omissions in the tabulations are few, though some less-widely reported provincial performances may have escaped the net and there may have been alterations in a few instances to advertised programmes. Where the orchestra's title implies the place of concert (e.g. Liverpool Philharmonic) the venue is not given.

VI WORKS FOR ORCHESTRA ALONE

VI/I FLORIDA (1886-7: Leipzig 1888)

It is one of those curiosities that nearly fifty years were allowed to elapse between the first (private) performance of this delightful score and any subsequent performance. And even then, when Beecham presented it in 1937, the second movement was replaced by the *Irmelin Prelude.* However he later made amends by performing that movement on its own on several occasions. He recorded *La Calinda* from the *Daybreak* movement with the LPO on January 7 1938. His magical 1956 recording would seem to be the only time he gave the work complete, albeit in five well-spaced sessions. Even in recent years performances of the suite have been rare, with isolated broadcasts by Vilem Tausky and Sir Charles Groves.

1937	April 1	RPS Coronation Concert QH (Mvts. 1, 3 & 4) b/cast

(Recording 1956 November 10, 19, 21 & 22, December 14 RPO)

By the River only (programmed as *On the River*)

1959	October 28	RPO Leeds
1960	January 29	Pittsburgh SO
	January 31	Pittsburgh SO
	March 17	Chicago SO
	March 18	Chicago SO
	March 20	Chicago SO televised
	April 24	RPO RFH
	May 7	RPO Portsmouth (Beecham's last concert)

VI/6 SUITE D'ORCHESTRE (1889-90) 1. MARCHE CAPRICE

Like similar small pieces, this work may well have been slipped into his concerts unadvertised as a 'lollipop'. (The remaining movements have been neither published nor performed.)

1946 November 21 RPO Central Hall Westminster Delius Festival f.p.
(recording 1946 December 19 RPO)
1948 July 10 BBC Northern O Manchester b/cast
1949 January 2 RPO b/cast
1950 February 9 RPO Oxford
1951 July 9 RPO Bristol (re-opening of Colston Hall) b/cast
October 31 RPO RFH
1952 January 22, 25, 26, 27 & 29 Boston SO
February 14, 15 & 16 San Francisco SO
(Recording 1956 October 31 RPO)

VI/7 THREE SMALL TONE POEMS (1888-90: London 18.11.46)

All three works were premièred by Richard Austin at the 1946 Festival.

1. SUMMER EVENING

For the 1949 broadcast *Radio Times* listed the work as 'Evening' and credited it as a 'first performance'.

1949 January 2 RPO b/cast
(Recording 1949 February 18 RPO)
1950 February 9 RPO Oxford
1951 October 31 RPO RFH
(Recording 1956 October 31 RPO)

2. SLEIGH RIDE

(Recording 1956 November 5 RPO)
1959 October 25 RPO RFH

3. SPRING MORNING

No Beecham performance nor any subsequent performance since the première has been traced.

VI/10 PAA VIDDERNE (1890-2: Oslo 10.10.91)

While admitting that, despite the work's 'breadth and vigour', it lacked the 'serenity and lyrical charm discoverable in all other earlier pieces', Beecham found no fault in its 'architecture and its downright force' and considered this work 'an effective show-piece'. Nevertheless he only once performed it in public, as a novelty in his 1946 Festival where it was variously referred to as 'Sur les Cimes', 'On the Mountain' (sic) or 'Under the Pines' for what was mistakenly credited as a first performance. Beecham's concert performance and subsequent recording would seem to have been the only British hearings of this rarity until Leslie Head gave the work with the Kensington Symphony Orchestra in 1974.

1946 November 8 RPO RAH Delius Festival First English performance
(Recording 1946 November 26 RPO)

VI/11 OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY (1897: Elberfeld 13.11.97)

Beecham called this 'an actively and at times a vigorously happy sort of piece' with a 'combination of serene content and lively impulse' none too frequent in Delius. Possessing that charm and serenity which the previous work lacked Beecham turned increasingly to this early work in his later years.

1908	May 16	New SO QH Second English performance
1935	March 10	LPO QH
1936	February 20	Hallé Manchester
	(Recording 1936 September 28 LPO)	
1939	December 3	Hallé Manchester
1944	April 13, 23, 25 & 28	Met Opera House New York
	May 8. 12. 17 & 20	Met Opera House New York
	(*Romeo and Juliet* Tudor ballet: see Journal 71 p.13)	
1945	September 19	BBC Northern O b/cast
1946	September 15	RPO Croydon (RPO's first concert)
	September 18	RPO Eastbourne (RPO's third concert)
	October 26	RPO RAH Delius Festival b/cast
	December 1	RPO Leicester
	(Recording 1950 February 7 RPO)	
1950	November 13	RPO Jackson, Mississippi
	November 16	RPO Chatanooga, Tennessee
1953	November 25	BBCSO RFH b/cast
	November 26	BBCSO b/cast
1956	September 19	RPO Wolverhampton
	(Recording 1957 April 2, October 8 RPO)	

VI/14 PARIS (1899: Elberfeld 14.12.01)

This was the first Delius work that Beecham conducted: an 'audacious experiment (the greatest yet made) in musical impressionism' (*A Mingled Chime* p.64). Built on a Straussian scale, it effectively became his Delian show-piece. Surprisingly *Paris* was not included in the 1929 Festival.

1908	January 11	New SO Liverpool
	February 26	NSO QH
	April 14	NSO QH
1910	December 7	(R)PS QH
1911	February 1	Birmingham Phil Soc
	June 16	Beecham SO QH all-Delius concert
1912	December 21	Beecham SO Berlin
1914	December	Hallé Sheffield
1915	January 7	Hallé Manchester
	January 26	RPS QH
	December 26	Santa Cecilia O Rome (see *M.C.* p.145)
1925	February 9	LSO QH
1926	February 1	LSO QH
1927		Vienna
1928	January 15	New York Phil
1929	February 8	Wireless SO Kingsway Hall b/cast
1932	November 24	RPS QH

1934	February 25	LPO QH
	April 8	LPO QH
	(Recording 1934 April 9 & 21 LPO)	
	October 6	LPO Leeds Festival
	November 8	RPS QH Delius Memorial Concert b/cast
	December 2	LPO QH
1935	January 24	City of Birmingham SO
	February 7	Hallé Manchester
	June 29	LPO Brussels
1936	January 18	New York PO
	January 19	New York PO
1937	February 3	BBCSO QH b/cast
	November 11	Berlin PO
1939	April 23	LPO RPS QH London Music Festival
1941	April 13	New York City SO
1946	September 24	Liverpool PO
	November 4	RPO RAH Delius Festival
1947	March 5,6 & 8	Concertgebouw O Amsterdam
1948	May 13	RPO Oxford
	May 30	Bournemouth Munic O
1951	June 20	BBCSO RAH b/cast
	June 21	BBCSO b/cast
	(Recording 1952 November 8 part only RPO unpublished)	
1953	April 8	RPO RFH
	(Recording 1955 October RPO)	
1956	February 3 & 4	Philadelphia O
	February 7	Philadelphia O Washington
	February 8	Philadelphia O Baltimore
	December 25	RPO b/cast (BBC recording)

VI/15 LEBENSTANZ (1901: Dusseldorf 21.1.04, later revised)

While acknowledging this work's inferiority to *Paris* 'in breadth of design, melodic inspiration and variety of mood', Beecham had himself contributed to the 'all but complete neglect which has overtaken it' which 'it hardly merits' by never performing it himself! In 1907 he did consider conducting it (see Journal 63 p.6) but this work has anyway had very few performances in this country compared with those abroad.

VI/16 BRIGG FAIR (1907: Liverpool 18.1.08)

Beecham rightly did not consider either *Brigg Fair* or *Dance Rhapsody No.1* 'equal in inspiration and individuality' to *In a Summer Garden*, adding that 'both suffer from over-repetition of the principal theme utilized in each instance'. But this did not stop him from playing both works widely, especially abroad.

1908	March 31	New SO QH First London performance
1910	November 13	Beecham SO Covent Garden
	December 18	Beecham SO Covent Garden
1911	December 5	Liverpool Phil Soc
1912	December 16	Beecham SO Berlin
1913	January 12	Beecham SO London Palladium
	February 16	Beecham SO London Palladium
1914	July 8	Beecham SO RAM all-Delius concert

1915	June	NSO RAH (conductor Beecham or Ronald)
1917	October 10	New Birmingham O
1919	February 22	Hallé Manchester
	(Recording 1928 July 11 LSO unpublished)	
1928	October 12	BBCSO QH b/cast
	(Recording 1928 Nov 20, Dec 11; 1929 July 10 'Symphony Orch')	
1929	October 12	Columbia Gram Co O QH Delius Festival
	October 22	Liverpool Phil Soc
1930	October 13	Leipzig Gewandhaus O
1932	March 23, 24 & 27	New York PO
	August 5	Bavarian State Theatre O
	October 7	LPO RPS QH (LPO's first concert)
1933	February 2	Hallé Manchester
	December 12	Berlin PO
1936	October 21	Stockholm Phil O
	October 29	Oslo Phil O
1937	March 4	Hallé
1940	August 13	Sydney SO
1944	April 13, 23, 25 & 28	Met Opera House New York
	May 8, 12, 17 & 20	Met Opera House New York
	(*Romeo and Juliet* Tudor ballet: see Journal 71 p.13)	
	October 6	LPO Watford
	October 7	LPO RAH
	October 26	LPO Oxford
1946	November 15	RPO RAH Delius Festival b/cast
	(Recording 1946 November 26 RPO)	
1950	January 31	Liverpool Phil O
	November 20	RPO Bloomington, Indiana
	November 24	RPO Evanston, Illinois
1956	January 19	Cleveland O
	January 21	Cleveland O
	October 29	RPO b/cast
	(Recording 1956 October 31; 1957 April 2 RPO)	

VI/17 IN A SUMMER GARDEN (1908: London 11.12.08)

Beecham always used the familiar revised version of this score and never resurrected the original version as, for example, did Constant Lambert on at least two occasions in broadcasts with the BBCSO in December 1942. He considered the published version 'well-nigh flawless in form and orchestration. The mood has an unimpeachable unity and in it. . may be found the quintessence of Delius.' The fabled Edinburgh Festival performance alluded to by Frank Howes in his *Times* obituary tribute has not so far been located. It is much to our loss that Beecham never committed to disc a stereo recording of the work in which he especially excelled.

1914	July 8	Beecham SO RAM all-Delius concert
1915	October 14	Hallé Manchester
	October 25	LSO QH
1926	January 18	LSO RAH
1929	October 12	Columbia Gram Co O QH Delius Festival
1931	December 7	LSO QH
1934	November 22	Hallé Manchester b/cast
	(Recording 1936 October 2 LPO)	
1936	October 4	LPO Covent Garden
	November 26	LPO Oxford

1939	February 22	BBCSO QH b/cast
1945	September 22	Liverpool Phil O
	November 11	Conservatoire O Stoll Theatre London
1946	September 17	RPO Folkestone (RPO's second concert)
	November 8	RPO RAH Delius Festival
1950	February 19	Bournemouth Munic O
1951	April 10	Liverpool Phil O
	October 17	RPO RFH (RPO's first RFH concert)
	(Recording 1951 October 27 RPO)	
	December 15	RPO Leeds
1954	November 4	RPO Oxford
	November 6	RPO RFH
1956	November 8	RPO RFH

VI/18 DANCE RHAPSODY NO I (1908: Hereford 8.9.08)

It was Beecham's practice in this work to effect a cut of eleven bars at 3 before $\boxed{17}$ The following is probably a very incomplete listing.

1911	June 16	Beecham SO QH all-Delius concert
1912	March 7	Hallé Manchester
	March 24	Beecham SO London Palladium
	October 6	Beecham SO
	December 16	Beecham SO Berlin
1914	April 16	Torquay Munic O
	June 26	Beecham SO French Embassy London
	July 8	Beecham SO RAM all-Delius concert
1929	October 24	RPS QH Delius Festival
1932	April 20	Musicians SO New York
1937	November 18	LPO RPS QH
1946	November 4	RPO RAH Delius Festival
	(Recording 1946 November 6 RPO unpublished)	
	(Recording 1948 May 8; 1949 Feb 18 unpublished)	
1949	June 24	RPO b/cast
1950	January 25	RPO RPS b/cast
	September 30	RPO Leeds Triennial Festival
	October 20	RPO Baltimore
	October 26	RPO Norwalk, Connecticut
	October 29	RPO New York
	November 1	RPO Norfolk, Virginia
	November 11	RPO New Orleans
	November 27	RPO Madison, Wisconsin
	December 2	RPO Ford Wayne, Indiana
	(Recording 1952 October 29 RPO)	
1954	April 1	RPO RAH
	December 25	RPO b/cast (BBC recording)
1958	November 4	RPO RFH
	December 25	RPO b/cast (BBC recording)

VI/19 TWO PIECES FOR SMALL ORCHESTRA (1911-12: Leipzig 23.10.13)

Beecham's performances of these two ever-popular pieces, *On hearing the first Cuckoo in Spring* and *Summer Night on the River*, have been too numerous to tabulate here. Quite soon after Mengelberg had given their British premières in January 1914 Beecham took them up – at first in his private concerts, as he wrote to Delius on April 20 1914: 'I have given your two little pieces . . once or twice lately at private concerts of which I have had several this winter. They are concerts from which I exclude both Public and Press, and for which only invitations are sent. The last one was at Howard de Walden's house, on which occasion we gave your pieces, which everyone liked immensely.'

His first public performance was at an all-Delius concert on July 8 1914. The pair were presented independently at both Delius Festivals (in 1946 in two separate concerts) and both works were played in May 1935 in St Peter's Church, Limpsfield, at Delius's reinterment (though possibly conducted on that occasion by Paul Beard). They were included in the LPO's 1936 German tour and the RPO's 1950 North American tour, and Beecham conducted either or both works abroad with the named orchestras of Sydney, Melbourne, Bergen, Oslo, Amsterdam, Boston, Cincinnati, Rochester, San Francisco, St Louis, New York and Los Angeles, as well as the Symphony of the Air.

His recording sessions were:

On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring

1927	December 19	(old) RPO
1946	October 30	RPO unpublished
1946	Dec 19; 1948 May 8	RPO
1956	October 31	RPO

Summer Night on the River

1928	July 12	(old) RPO
1935	October 4	LPO
1949	February 18	RPO
1957	March 28	RPO

VI/20 NORTH COUNTRY SKETCHES (1913-14)

While recognising the greatness of this work and its companion nature poem *The Song of the High Hills,* Beecham remarked on its austerity and added the mild reservation that 'although there is no falling away here of power and mastery, we do not find it easy to suppress a twinge of longing for the fragrant and affectionate intimacy of an earlier day'. Perhaps for this reason his performances have not been as frequent as one might have expected. He also stated that 'a good performance is essential to reveal the unique character of each of the sections'. At his second performance of the work the last movement was omitted for reasons Beecham made clear to the audience in a speech reported in *The Times*: 'The manuscript parts had come late and had been found to be full of errors. Complete rehearsal had been impossible. He felt sure that "the most critical audience in London" would rather hear three of them "fairly well played" and wait for the fourth another time. So we were given only three and his laconic description was accurate as regard the first and third *Autumn* and *Dance* but did less than justice to the performance of *Winter Landscape* in which the frigid tone qualities were exquisitely balanced.' In his 78 record set (but not its LP transfer) and his last broadcast performance Beecham interchanged the order of the inner movements, a practice that was also adopted by Stanford Robinson in a 1963 broadcast.

1915	May 10	LSO QH First Performance
1928	October 15	LSO QH (Mvts. 1, 2 & 3 only)
1929	October 24	RPS QH Delius Festival
	November 7	'Sir Thomas Beecham's Orchestra' Oxford
1934	February 22	LPO RPS QH
	(Recording 1945 October 16 LPO unpublished)	
1946	November 21	RPO Central Hall Westminster Delius Festival
	(Recording 1949 February 14 RPO)	
1949	June 24	RPO b/cast
1951	October 13	BBCSO b/cast
	October 14	BBCSO b/cast
1959	November 4	RPO b/cast

VI/21 AIR AND DANCE (1915)

Only two Beecham performances have been traced of this neglected miniature (which seems nonetheless to have cast its spell on Bax when he was writing the slow movement of his *Winter Legends*). The precise date of the first (private) performance has not been ascertained.

1915		Private first performance at Lady Cunard's
1929	October 16	Orchestra Aeolian Hall Delius Festival (announced as 'first performance)

VI/22 A DANCE RHAPSODY NO 2 (1916: London 20.10.23)

'While lacking the variety and brilliance of its predecessor (*Dance Rhapsody No 1*),' writes Beecham, it is 'in some ways a more meritorious achievement in the way of construction.' But despite the attention he gave it in the recording studio, concert performances seem to have been very few.

1929	February 8	Wireless SO Kingsway Hall b/cast
	October 12	Columbia Gram Co O QH Delius Festival
1933	March 5	LPO QH all-Delius concert
	(Recording 1945 October 16 LPO unpublished)	
	(Recording 1946 October 3 RPO)	
1946	November 18	RPO Central Hall Westminster Delius Festival
	(Recording 1956 November 7 RPO)	

VI/23 EVENTYR (1917: London 11.1.19)

While, generally speaking, the later works of Delius found less favour with Beecham, *Eventyr* was a notable exception. 'It is not only an effective example of orchestral virtuosity,' he wrote, 'but has much charm and variety of effect. It contains at least one delightful fragment of melody that recalls the Delius of earlier days. .'

Jelka Delius wrote to Marie Clews about an amusing incident that happened while Delius was listening in from Grez to the February 1929 broadcast: 'A funny thing occurred: when "Eventyr" was played, which was inspired by Norwegian Folktales, about trolls and "underearthly" creatures, suddenly two large mice trotted thro the room quite deliberately and sat down behind the loudspeaker. They took no notice of us; and I can only suppose that the music affected them like the Pied Piper of Hamelin did the Rats . .' (29.4.29)

1927	October 17	LSO QH
1929	February 8	Wireless SO Kingsway Hall b/cast
	October 18	BBCSO QH Delius Festival b/cast
1930	January 29	Berlin PO
1933	November 22	BBCO QH b/cast
1934	March 1	Hallé Manchester b/cast
	November 8	RPS QH Delius Memorial Concert b/cast
	(Recording 1934 November 14 LPO)	
1935	March 10	LPO QH all-Delius concert
1936	January 8	New York Phil O
	January 10	New York Phil O
1937	February 25	RPS QH
1939	November 23	RPS QH
1944	April 13, 23, 25 & 28	Met Opera House New York
	May 8, 12, 17 & 20	Met Opera House New York
	(*Romeo and Juliet* Tudor Ballet: see Journal 71 p.13)	
	December 14	Liverpool Phil O
1946	February 14	Rochester PO
	March 27	Rochester PO Pittsburgh
	November 15	RPO RAH Delius Festival b/cast
1947	December 22	RPO Leeds
1949	January 22	RPO b/cast
	(Recording 1951 January 12, April 3 RPO)	

VI/24 A SONG BEFORE SUNRISE (1918: London 19.9.23)

In keeping with his general attitude towards the later works, Beecham felt that in this ‘charming fragment’, as in *Eventyr*, it ‘is possible to trace an inner sense of relief when during the (1915-1921 period Delius) diverts to the media of his earlier days’.

1929	October 16	Orchestra Aeolian Hall Delius Festival
	November 29	Eastbourne Munic O
1930	January 23	LSO Oxford
1932	January 29	Amsterdam Concertgebouw Chamber O The Hague
	(Recording 1945 October 16 LPO unpublished)	
1946	November 18	RPO Central Hall Westminster Delius Festival
	(Recording 1946 December 19 RPO unpublished)	
	(Recording 1949 February 18, April 6 RPO)	
1949	June 24	RPO b/cast
	(Recording 1956 November 5 & 7 RPO)	

VI/26 A SONG OF SUMMER (1929: London 17.9.31)

Premièred – like the three previous ones – by Wood, Beecham had little to say of this work beyond calling it an ‘ingenious effort of reconstruction’, and for the dictated works in general he could only offer the epithet ‘heroic’. Although he never conducted *A Song of Summer*, it was initially programmed for the sixth of the 1946 Festival concerts.

VI/27 IRMELIN PRELUDE (1931)

This work, preserving as it does the charm of early Delius, may well have received more performances under Sir Thomas’s baton than those listed below. It has had a colourful life, first as an interlude in the 1935 *Koanga* production, then substituting for a movement in *Florida*, forming part of the Tudor ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, and last but not least as a concert item in its own right.

1935	September 23	et seq *Koanga* production (q.v. Journal 71 p.10)
1937	April 1	RPS QH (see *Florida*)
	(Recording 1938 January 7 LPO unpublished)	
	(Recording 1938 July 18 LPO)	
1938	October 16	LPO Covent Garden
1939	January 8	LPO London Palladium
	February 7	Liverpool PO
	March 25	Hallé Manchester
1944	April 13, 23, 25 & 28	Met Opera House New York
	May 8, 12, 17 & 20	Met Opera House New York
	(*Romeo and Juliet* Tudor ballet: see Journal 71 p.13)	
	October 21	Liverpool PO
1946	July 20	BBC Theatre O b/cast
	November 21	RPO Central Hall Westminster Delius Festival
	(Recording 1946 December 21 RPO)	
1953	April 11	RPO RFH
1954	November 13	RPO RFH Robert Mayer concert
	(Recording 1956 October 31, November 7 RPO)	
1956	November 8	RPO RFH

VI/28 FANTASTIC DANCE (1931: London 12.1.34)

Beecham never conducted this work which he incorrectly referred to as being 'for strings'.

[To be concluded]

PART ONE – ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA

I/2 IRMELIN

c) The BBC Television programme consisted of an introductory speech by Beecham, 'SCENES from IRMELIN', and substantial vocal extracts from Act III. The latter, with part of the speech, has been recently issued on a private Beecham Society set WSA 521/2, together with the 'SCENES' performance originally issued on WSA 501.

d) for 1953 October 12 read October 14
add 1954 December 6 RPO BBCTV
In his 'SCENES from IRMELIN' performances Beecham made one small departure from the printed score by repeating the two bars at $\boxed{135}$ that lead into the *Andantino.*

I/6 A VILLAGE ROMEO AND JULIET

b) Mr Maurice Parker writes that the dates for the last two 1920 performances should be March 25 and April 6 and not as printed in Dawn Redwood's *Flecker and Delius.*

II/4 A MASS OF LIFE

Mr A G Lovgreen has kindly pointed out the omission of one non-Beecham *Mass,* at Huddersfield on 19.3.48 conducted by Sargent. He adds that according to the programmes, both on that occasion and in his 1944 performance Sargent *did* follow Beecham's altered order of movements. (In at least his last three performances Sargent only re-positioned the interval.)

II/6 THE SONG OF THE HIGH HILLS

The venues for the two 1948 performances should be interchanged.

II/10 IDYLL

The soloists for the 1946 performance were Eileen Farrell and Mack Harrell.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author once again wishes to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Maurice Parker of the Beecham Society. Special thanks are also due to Malcolm Walker for kindly checking the recording dates. Sir Thomas's comments on the works of Delius, unless otherwise stated, are taken from his biography of Delius.

Margot La Rouge

World Première Broadcast on February 21 1982 (BBC Radio 3)

by David Eccott

The evocative *Prelude,* familiar to us all, reached its climax and the gentle, expressive melody of the final bars melted away. Then instead of the solo entry of the baritone voice, the cor anglais introduced a not altogether unfamiliar theme. This was echoed throughout the orchestra until interrupted by the gay laughter of drinkers in a Parisian cafe. With this the long-awaited first broadcast performance of Delius's *Margot la Rouge*, in Eric Fenby's performing version was well under way.

Listening to the music of the first scene it was difficult, with all the thematic reminders, to put the *Idyll* completely out of mind and concentrate on the operatic content of what one was hearing. The unrecognisable episodes, although brief, jolted a little at first and it was not until the stormy transition into Scene Three, with its exciting orchestration and effects, that one felt more comfortable.

With the gaiety of Scene Three and, in particular, the entry of Margot, a definite flavour began to emerge. This carried us nicely into the fourth scene where the jovial banter between the girls and the three soldiers preluded the appearance of the second main character, that of Sergeant Thibault. The fact that there is no real character portrayal until quite some time after the opera's beginning is one criticism that could be levelled at the work. Even Margot has very little to say for herself and we only learn about her from gossip. However, with the emergence of Thibault one immediately feels that here is a character with whom one can identify. His music endears us to him and, incidentally, I thought that the rôle of Thibault was particularly well sung in this performance (by Kenneth Woollam).

Of course Scenes 5 and 6 bring forth the best music in the opera and, as all the other characters seemingly fade away, we are left with just Margot and Thibault. It was their deepening emotion for each other that, for me, brought the most enjoyable moments in the opera.

I found Scene 7 very exciting at times and, at others, a little tedious. The point where the Artist is stabbed seemed to lack something and it didn't seem to be the climax I thought it would be. The fault, I think, lies in the libretto: there is too much dead-wood before the blood begins to spill, and then it is all over too quickly.

However, what a pleasure it was finally to hear a performance of *Margot la Rouge.* We must indeed be very grateful to Eric Fenby for his painstaking and expert work. The orchestration was a delight and I particularly liked the opportune writing for percussion. There was also more solo chordal work from the brass than I had expected. The performance itself, I thought, was quite fine and polished with some excellent performances from the lead singers. I found the interpretation by Norman Del Mar and the BBC Concert Orchestra very pointed with splendid playing from all quarters. The tempi were never allowed to become too lax, although at times this was at the expense of a certain depth and richness which I felt was a little lacking during a few moments in the score. The only real qualm I had was that the work was not being sung to an English translation. However, in retrospect, I now feel that it was right to retain the original French. Somehow it gave the work an essence of 'à la Parisienne' which came over particularly well in the love duet.

Despite the unkindness (perhaps ignorance would be a more apt word) of the critics, one would hope that *Margot la Rouge* will appeal not only to Delius lovers but also to other listeners as well. It would be a pity if, after its première, *Margot la Rouge* were now left to become an interesting curiosity for the Delius addict. While it may not rank amongst Delius's finest compositions, it does contain a lot of beautiful music and it is another part of the spectrum which Delius's music encompassed. Personally I hope that sometime in the future *Margot* will receive a stage performance. It would be interesting to couple it with a short opera by another composer in order to achieve a programme of suitable length; one of the neglected operas of Holst might make an attractive coupling. I am sure that with the right treatment and imaginative set design and costumes, *Margot la Rouge* could be very effective and colourful on stage. Let us hope that some enterprise might try and prove me correct.

[Neither John Rosselli in the *Guardian* nor, predictably, Paul Griffiths in *The Times* had any kind things to say about the opera. Both castigated the text – 'bits of slang and brutality planted in the banal text like currants in a suet pudding' – and Rosselli also considered there was 'far too much dialogue to allow the slow unfolding of orchestral textures with their characteristic repeated woodwind accents, except in the tender central duet. There was little Delius could do except to try to spice his normal andante with sinister chords and sequences. Clever bits of impressionism (a storm, a ghostly fanfare as the soldiers leave) do not make up for the sadly unconvincing double murder'. Neither review provided any hope for the opera's future. Griffiths concluding that '*Margot* may now safely be left to sleep again'. Is it to be a case of '*Margot* is dead; long live the *Idyll*'? One surely hopes not – Ed.]

Forthcoming Events

Monday May 17th at 8.00 p.m. Newbury Spring Festival, Berkshire

Julian Lloyd-Webber performs Delius's *Cello Sonata* with Simon Nicholls (piano) at Highclere Castle. Tickets £10 (to include wine). Tel. Newbury 49919.

Sunday June 6th at 3.00 p.m. Limpsfield, Surrey

Visit to Delius's grave at St Peter's Church. Once again Mr and Mrs Parfitt have kindly extended an invitation for tea afterwards to any members making the trip. Those wishing to accept should notify Gilbert Parfitt well in advance at 31 Lynwood Grove, Orpington, Kent. Limpsfield lies on the A25 between Reigate and Sevenoaks. A map showing access to the church was printed in Journal 57.

Saturday June 12th at 2.30 p.m. Mary Ward House, 5 Tavistock Place, London

Delius Society AGM. The Annual Dinner will be held as last year in the Bloomsbury Centre Hotel, Coram Street, a short distance away. Further details are included with this issue.

Saturday June 19th. Midlands Branch Meeting, Kidderminster

Provisional date for a talk on Gerald Finzi given by the host, Michael Green. All enquiries to Midlands Branch Chairman, Dick Kitching, at 'Ravensdale'. Bullhurst Lane, Weston Underwood, Derby.

Wednesday August 18th. Lucerne Festival

Performance of *La messe de la vie (Mass of Life).* Sir Charles Groves conducts the Festival choir and orchestra with soloists Evelyn Brunner (soprano), Nicole Buloz (alto), Ian Caley (tenor) and John Shirley-Quirk (baritone). The Festival has a strong emphasis on British music.

Further details may be obtained from the Programme Secretary – Derek Cox, Highfield, Deanland Road, Balcombe, Sussex RH17 6LX. (Tel: 0444 83294).

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